# Natchez Trace and the Jackson Purchase

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Natchez Trace and the Jackson Purchase

**Essential Question: How did the Natchez Trace and Jackson Purchase contribute to the settlement of west Tennessee?**

By the end of the War of 1812 most of east and middle Tennessee were firmly in the hands of white settlers. The land between the Tennessee and Mississippi rivers remained under the control of the Chickasaw. However, the state government of North Carolina had issued land grants for that area that the Tennessee government wanted to honor. In 1818 Andrew Jackson and Isaac Shelby were sent to negotiate an agreement for the land with the Chickasaw. Jackson and Shelby convinced the Chickasaw to sell tract for three hundred thousand dollars. The region opened for settlement in 1819. Jackson, John Overton and James Winchester quickly established the town of Memphis.

Jackson was already familiar with the area having frequently traveled along the Natchez Trace. The Natchez Trace was originally a series of animal migration routes and Native American trade and travel routes. Early explorers and settlers had used the Trace and as early at 1801 United States troops had made improvements to the area. Jackson used the Trace extensively while commanding Tennessee troops during the War of 1812. The Trace was a vital transportation route linking New Orleans to Nashville and points beyond. “Kaintucks, backwoodsmen from Kentucky, Tennessee and Ohio, would float goods down the Ohio and Mississippi rivers and then return home via the Natchez Trace.

<http://www.nps.gov/natr/historyculture/people.htm>

<http://tennesseeencyclopedia.net/entry.php?rec=698>